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## THE PAN-AMERICAN UNION AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

*By Señor Don Ignacio Calderon, Envoy Extraordinary and  
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When after the fall of Napoleon some of the autocratic powers of Europe, Germany and Austria amongst them, formed what they misnamed the Holy Alliance, to crush popular rights and revive the disappearing so-called divine power of kings, the New World had succeeded in shaking off the very kind of government they intended to support. The United States, although still in the early stage of her healthy and powerful development, saw immediately that the New World could not exist half democratic and half autocratic. President Monroe made the brave declaration that no new colonies would be tolerated in America and that the late Spanish dependencies that had obtained their freedom should not be deprived of their independence.

This declaration, that in due course of time has been the object of many comments and interpretations, considered in itself was a bold notice to the arbitrary and monarchical powers of Europe that the United States did not intend to tolerate any other form of government than the one established by themselves and adopted by the former colonies of Spain; that is the government of the people for the people. To make such a declaration, President Monroe did not deem

it necessary to ask the consent or the approval of any other nation: it was absolutely a free and voluntary warning to the scheming despots of Europe that freedom was and must continue to be the heritage of America.

The Spanish republics, which at the time the Monroe declaration was made were yet fighting the war for independence, considered it as a token of friendship and moral help to their endeavours; but none of them saw in it a bond to put them as it were under the tutelage of the United States.

I must frankly state that if anything has awakened a feeling of distrust and attributed to this country imperialistic tendencies, it is the way in which on more than one occasion the Monroe doctrine has been interpreted.

It was contended that inasmuch as the United States has by its own accord taken the republics of America under her protection, it was her duty to see that they be made to fulfill the obligations contracted with foreign subjects or nations, interfering in that way in their domestic affairs and acting as a sheriff on behalf of the foreign claimants. This specious interpretation of the Monroe doctrine created a natural uneasiness and general protest against it, and more particularly when it was found out that in most cases the claims lacked justice and when submitted to arbitration, few of them have ever been found fully justified.

And it must not be forgotten that such claims originate generally out of concessions deliberately obtained from revolutionary and arbitrary governments, which means that those concessions were in fact the result of improper and condemnable collusions between foreign speculators and unscrupulous revolutionists.

No self respecting and well known business men or corporations have ever been involved in that kind of question, nor has any country on this continent deliberately refused to comply with obligations justly and honestly contracted. Many instances could be remembered of great naval demonstrations backing claims which when submitted to an impartial examination turned out to have originated in shameful exploitation.

I must say that if the international pirates did not rely on the backing of their own governments, much bad blood and unfortunate complications would be avoided and the peace of the nations secured.

The remedy against the evil of unhealthy concessions with their consequent troubles is not to uphold them, but to discourage them.

The distortion of the Monroe doctrine from a great and generous determination to keep the western hemisphere as the unpolluted temple of freedom and democracy has given to the ill disposed occasion to accuse the United States of aiming to become the guardian of the other republics and assume the right to interfere in their domestic affairs.

The contempt with which it was so common to speak in former years of South America and its revolutions, and the mistrust that such an attitude produced in those countries, kept our peoples in a mood that was not the most conducive to a closer and more friendly understanding.

The great statesman J. G. Blaine conceived one day the idea of calling the nations of America to a Pan-American Congress in Washington; and this first attempt to bring them together, to study their needs and the measures necessary to foster trade, create a common interest in their progress and welfare has been the origin of the present Pan-American ideal.

The basis of the Pan-American Union is the perfect equality recognized amongst the nations that belong to it. In the several Pan-American conferences that have taken place in Washington, in Mexico, in Rio and Buenos Aires, the delegates discussed and adopted very important resolutions concerning the building of roads that eventually would link together North and South America by a Pan-American railroad, questions of trade facilities, and educational development. In fact all matters that concern the increase of friendly relations and develop mutual understanding tending to harmonize the general interests of our peoples, have been discussed and agreed upon.

This coming in contact with each other has created a better knowledge of the ideals and needs of the different

republics; their development and growth have been more clearly followed and understood, and the advantage of pulling together has become more apparent, bending our efforts to the single and high aim of making each and all of our nations the worthy home of free men, conscious of their duties and devoted to the advancement of all mankind in the path of right, of freedom and mutual help.

If the Monroe doctrine is the proud determination of the United States to keep the whole American Continent free from any contamination of foreign autocrats, the Pan-American Union is the agreement of all the republics to live together, linked by the great ideals of democracy; not looking down upon the weaker or the less advanced ones, but determined to help them and to forge ahead in a united and free effort to reach the goal of popular welfare, free and peaceful development, and the elimination of pauperism and anarchy.

Most of the Spanish speaking republics have a great duty to perform, which is ever more and more pressing, in order to make democracy a reality and atone for the wrongs of centuries of oppression which during and after the Spanish domination have been endured by the unhappy descendants of the two great Indian empires of the New World, the original owners of the land. Heartless and crushing as was the treatment of the Indians by their conquerors, their condition remains without redress under the republic. Had the Indians of Mexico, Central and South America been educated and their land and personal rights respected, the social and political conditions of those countries would have been very much advanced. The Indians are as capable of becoming good and progressive citizens as any white man, and many of them have distinguished themselves as soldiers, writers and statesmen.

Missionary and philanthropic associations in the United States expend millions of money in the Far East, while nearby there is a most necessary work of education and civilization. The Indians form an important part of the population of many republics and could become very useful citizens when redeemed from their intellectual and political degradation.

The negroes in the United States are a very serious problem, because their psychology differs radically from the white man's, while the Indian in time will, by education and assimilation with the dominant races, become a valuable addition to the population.

The war has no doubt brought the American republics nearer to each other. We feel the unity of our political principles and the absence of any cause of antagonism, while the spirit of peace and brotherhood grows stronger. In the Old World, centuries of oppression and rivalry have left amongst the newly formed nations the seeds of hatred and many causes of friction which, even after the horrors of the last war, threaten to involve them in new struggles. We in the New World, inspired by broader sentiments and the desire of a closer union, breathe an atmosphere of friendliness toward each other and all mankind.